

## **DEQ POLICY MEMORANDUM**

### **PM06-3**

#### **DEQ PUBLIC OUTREACH POLICY**

##### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to document the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's support of public outreach as an effective means of raising awareness and generating understanding among stakeholders, the regulated community, and the general public of environmental laws, rules, and programs and of DEQ's role in protecting public health and the environment.

##### **Background**

Environmental laws, rules, and programs can be complex and difficult to understand. Moreover, various agencies at the local, state, and federal levels of government are involved in implementing these laws, rules, and programs. As a result, it is challenging for stakeholders, the regulated community, and the general public to understand and comply with environmental laws, rules, and programs and to know to whom to turn for assistance.

For the purposes of this policy, public outreach is defined as any effort to increase awareness of *and* enhance public involvement and support of environmental laws, rules, and programs through education/information sharing. Examples of public outreach activities include presentations to school children, businesses, local and state leaders, and community groups; technical assistance visits to businesses and industries; participation in community events; development and dissemination of written publications; and information-sharing via the agency's Web site and other media sources.

##### **Statement of Policy**

Idaho's environmental laws, rules, and programs are most effective when they are understood, implemented, and integrated into the daily lives of our citizens. DEQ's ability to provide leadership in protecting public health and the environment is enhanced by public understanding and awareness of the department's resources and programs. Public outreach is key to attaining these goals. DEQ employees are encouraged to:

- Integrate public outreach into their daily duties and responsibilities.
- Respond favorably whenever possible to requests to participate in public outreach activities in their communities.
- Seek opportunities to partner with schools, businesses, other government entities, and community organizations to conduct public outreach on environmental laws, rules, and programs to stakeholders, the regulated community, and the general public.

##### **Implementation**

This policy shall be effective immediately from the date of signature.

DATED this 11th day of July, 2006.

  
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TONI HARDESTY  
DIRECTOR